

Joshua

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and desperation in entering into reality and experiencing deliverance from sin and its consequences.

Duration: 51:26

Scripture: Deuteronomy 34:1

Topics: "Joshua"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by reminding the audience of the history of Israel, a nation that was held captive in Egypt for 400 years. Despite being descendants of Abraham, they were influenced by the idolatry and worship practices of the Egyptians. The speaker then reads from the last chapter of Deuteronomy, where Moses is shown the land that God had promised to give to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, due to the Israelites' lack of faith and disobedience, they were unable to enter the promised land and instead wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and obedience in receiving God's blessings and warns against rejecting the truth and hardening one's heart.

Transcript

We'll turn, please, to the last chapter of Deuteronomy and the first chapter of Joshua. You will have the portion of Scripture that shall be before us tonight. As a background for our thinking, I shall read the last chapter, chapter 34 of Deuteronomy, all 12 verses.

And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all of Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah unto the outmost sea. And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.

And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed. I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.

And he, that is the Lord, buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peon. But no man knoweth of his replica unto this day. And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died.

His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plain of Moab thirty days. So the days of weeping and mourning for Moab Moses were ended.

And Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom. For Moses had laid his hands upon him, and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.

In all the signs and the wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land. And in all that mighty hand, and in all that great terror which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel. Now the first chapter, the first ten verses rather, of the book of Joshua.

Now after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead. We'll stop there for the moment. Let's just remind ourselves of what has happened thus far in this narrative, this record rather, Israel a ransomed redeemed nation brought out of Egypt.

Remember that when we first began reading the book of Exodus, Israel with the children of Abraham through Jacob, had been in Egypt for 400 years. They had increased to probably three million, or very nearly three million people. They were held in the teachings of the idolatry of Egypt.

Now you must remember that though they were the blood descendants of Abraham, they were held in all of the idolatry, in all of the idol worship, in all of the demon worship, if you please, that characterized the Egyptians. They were not one bit better. It was for nothing that was in the people that God called this people out of Egypt.

It wasn't because they were better, more faithful, more earnest, more devout, more sincere. There was nothing at all in Israel, in this people, that made them of greater worth, value, or greater desire to the Lord. It was something that was in his own heart.

He had made a covenant with Abraham, and a promise to Isaac, and a solemn agreement with Jacob. Now 400 years after the time of Joseph, he is leading out this nation, by blood, by power, by his stretched out arm. The Passover lamb is sacrificed, and the blood sprinkled on the lintel in the side posts of the door.

The angel of death passes through Egypt, and the firstborn of Israel are spared, and the firstborn of Egypt are slain. That night, three million people move out from their homes, from their slave quarters, laden down with gold, and silver, and fabrics, everything of value that the Egyptians had. They paid them, as it were, for back wages, long overdue.

They didn't take this. It says they borrowed, but actually what it was, the Egyptians were so glad to get rid of them now, that they paid them the back wages they ought to have received for their service. And so this laden people, this healed people, for there wasn't a feeble man among the three million, started out, and they came to the Red Sea.

You will recall that the Red Sea speaks to us of deliverance from the avenging power of death. Behind him came Pharaoh's army, and before them was the sea, and they passed through the sea by the miracle of God turning back the water. And this is to us a picture of our redemption, a picture of our salvation from the penalty of sin.

This is what happened to you when you came to the cross as a self-convinced, self-condemned sinner, with a mountain of guilt that no amount of service, or work, or a fasting, or praying, or sacrifice could ever remove. Nothing could take away this great mountain of your sin. You understand that by speaking to someone tonight that is still without God and without peace in Christ.

May I say this, that if you were to perfectly serve God from tonight on, in everything to keep his word, this perfect obedience would not atone for one past sin. Because this obedience is the minimum that God requires, and there's no merit in performing the minimum. You don't get paid overtime for eight hours, and you don't get any for obeying God.

And so a lifetime of obedience to the will of God wouldn't acquire merit enough to atone for one sin. And anyone that would think that by his work he would earn deliverance from the penalty of his sin is just failing to comprehend the nature of sin, the malignity of it, and the enormous crime that it is against a holy God. The only way that one can ever be delivered is by the supernatural intervention, the miraculous provision of God as it was pictured in the land, and perpictured by this crossing of the Red Sea.

So we see ourselves here coming to the cross, laden with our guilt and sin, accepting our condemnation as the publican in the temple, realizing that we deserve wrath and justice and judgment. We stand there at the cross and see the Lord Jesus as he's pictured by the Lamb, as he, through the blood sprinkled on the doorpost, and by his resurrection power as he makes a way through the mouth, through the sea, wakes a way out of the great death in which we were held. Now we'll have to find something as a counterpart then to the wilderness wanderings.

God didn't intend Israel to be in the wilderness longer than 40 days. Even a company that large could have well made the trip from where they were right into the land of Canaan in 40 days, had they been prepared to do it. But they stayed years.

The purpose of this wandering was that a generation should die off, a generation whose hearts were filled with unbelief, a generation that came up to Kadesh Barnea and looked across and saw truly that the land flowed with milk and honey, and the grapes were there of great size and sweetness, a land to be desired. But the ten spies came back with an evil report saying the people were as giants and the Israelites were as grasshoppers. They had already forgotten the power of God.

And they voted with the ten, did the people of Israel, and the result of it was that for 40 years they just wandered around waiting for somebody to die, waiting for them to get out of the way, waiting for their life to leave their body and their bones to bleach the sand. They counted themselves unworthy to enter in to the heritage of the Lord. And I suppose we could liken this and say that there are through the centuries multitudes of Christians that have seen the glorious provision that God has made for his children, but their hearts staggering through unbelief or some other kind of disobedience, they have passed by the point of entering into the land and have wandered around through the years of futility and uselessness and emptiness until finally they've just been taken home and they have never entered in to that which God provided for them.

Now this is always the consequence of teaching. Every truth, every truth in the Scripture has a double effect all the way along. The preaching of the cross is to them that are saved the power of God, but to them that perish it is foolishness.

It is a savor of death unto death to the impenitent, as it's a savor of life unto life to those that in repentance and faith receive it. By the same token, the teaching of deliverance through our identification with Christ is invariably a savor of death unto death to that person who will not enter in, who will not see, will not receive, and will thus have no cloak. There is in a sense one could say it is often better for truth not to come to certain people at least, because when the truth is come, they're exposed.

The exposure means that they now are dealt with on a double basis. What they have done, which they had been doing previously to the coming of truth, now the fact that they continue to do it means that they are guilty of the deed plus guilty of trampling the truth of God unto their hearts and their guilt is doubled. Light that is not walked in and obeyed becomes darkness to the person that hears it.

And for this reason, I'm always somewhat reluctant to minister in churches where certain areas of truth have never been presented. It's of course a great joy and a great delight, and how many churches there are. One of, of course I delight to go to our Alliance churches, but from time to time I'm invited to go to other churches, Baptist, Presbyterian, independent churches, and so many times you'll find such a, such a hunger on the part of people that are not familiar with these truths.

Sit there like this with their mouths open, just, just thrilled, just delighted, so excited about the fact that God is meeting their need. But do you know what I find happens? That that company of people that receive the truth and obey the truth are soon put in a situation where they're isolated from the rest of the group. I found it happening again and again.

Well, why? Well, it's this way. Do you remember when the Pharisees found out that Jesus had something they didn't have? They had one of two alternatives. They either had to seek it or to kill him, but they couldn't stay the same.

Never, nothing would ever be the same after he preached the truth of regeneration by the Holy Ghost. You see, the Pharisees and the people of Israel thought that if they believed the Torah and the Talmud, and if they were baptized and circumcised and came into the religion of Judah and performed the ceremonies and remembered the holy days, that's all that was needed. All that was needed.

But, Christ came and he said you must be born again, a supernatural, miraculous operation of God upon the individual. This meant then that the great system of Phariseeism, with all their large synagogues and large attendants and activity and great coffers of money, instead of being what they thought it was, the flower of religion and the great day, meant that it was a snare and a delusion and a byway to death. And when these religious leaders found that this was the case, and that this young man from Galilee was coming with a message that contradicted everything for which they had stood, and that he was exposing their work as being superficial and shallow and empty, really, and actually a means of death, why, they either had one of two alternatives.

They had to seek what he was talking about or kill him. This is invariably the response to truth. And so you will find that when Joshua and Caleb came back with this report, that Israel turned on them.

These that were there resented them and felt perhaps that they were the means of bringing them into difficulty. You go into a truth, go into a church with a testimony of deliverance and the fullness of Christ, and you'll find that some of the people in that place will, at the time it's given, nobody knows really what it's about. Then if you find an inner response, and they are hungry, and they open their hearts to it, and then they enter in, and there's something different about them.

They're now a minority, usually, a minority that's different, and they're isolated. And the consequence of it is that many times this group of people have to just either wander around through the years, staying in the same group where the truth has been rejected as the little hated minority that are misunderstood, waiting for the others to die off because they've had light and wouldn't walk in it, and now their hearts have turned against it. Or they have to walk off and leave the group because they wouldn't do it.

The Lord didn't say he came, he said I didn't come to send peace, I came to send a sword. And truth always has this double effect, it divides both ways, it cuts both ways, not just one. He said it'll separate husbands from their wives, and children from their parents, and employers from their employees, and servants from their masters, because when the truth is received and walked in by one and rejected by another, neither are the same.

One goes on, softened, open, blessed, the other goes on, hardened, and more distant, until God in sovereign grace brings the other to himself. Now that's what happened. He brought them up against the very edge of this wonderful land, he'd given them marvelous demonstrations of his power, and he said go in.

But they didn't go in. We come to the fact that at the end of forty years, Moses, having trespassed against the Lord, for he was provoked by the people, God said when they needed water the second time, he said Moses, speak to the rock. Just speak to it.

But Moses in his anger took his rod and he smote the rock, and he broke the type, because the first smiting of the rock was the smiting of Christ, by which the water of life was revealed and released for a lost world. But Christ was only smitten once. And when Moses smote the rock the second time, I say he broke the type, he marred the picture.

And God said to him, Moses, you'll never go into the land. Never go in. And so he come up to the shore of the border of Canaan, right up against the Jordan River, and God says, come on Moses.

And they go up Mount Pisgah, Nebo, and there he shows them the entire land. And then it says, and Moses died and God buried him. His grave is never known.

We do know this, that Moses stood with Christ and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. So wherever he was buried, it didn't make any great difference. We know where he was.

But the fact was, the law has a good purpose. It has a noble work. The purpose of the law was to bring men to a sense of their sin.

The law was the schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. The law was given that the sinner might discover his sinfulness and that his sin might have the character of transgression. It's the law that God uses to prepare sinners for grace.

And it was the law also that was used to show you as a Christian the conflict between what you, your old nature and your new nature. It was the law which revealed to you. Now the difference was that after you crossed the Red Sea in salvation, you were on the side of the law.

And when you came through the cross in salvation, you were on the side of the law. But it was still the law. Thou shalt not be angry that showed you as a Christian that the anger in your heart was wrong and grievous to God.

It was the fact that you broke the law that you loved that made you as a Christian so anxious for deliverance from yourself, from the tyranny of yourself. The law had that second purpose. As a sinner, it showed you that you were standing over the roof of hell and you had nothing in which to trust and were under the sentence of death.

But as a Christian, having been born of God, having a heart to please God, a desire to please him, it was the law that showed you in how many ways you failed to be what God wanted you to be. As you read the Word, as you read the testimony and the teachings and the law, after you were saved, you found that there were attitudes, traits, dispositions, motives even, that were contrary to the Spirit of God. And you found, as Paul found in Romans 7, there was a conflict there.

There was a law within you which wanted to please God, and there was another law that warred in your members that sought to please yourself. And so you were drawn into conflict and drawn into battle, and it was the law that showed you that you not only needed to be delivered from the penalty of your sin, but you needed to be delivered from yourself. So Moses, as the law, had a good purpose.

And it was as they wandered in the wilderness that they discovered that in them, in their flesh, there was no good thing, and the only thing that could happen to the flesh was death. That's all. Only thing that could happen to the flesh was death.

Now in the case of this generation, they died on the outside in the wilderness. They died. Unfortunately for them, they didn't understand the truth we do, and they were an ensample for us.

Their judgment was just because of their disobedience. But we understand that from the fact that that generation died, that the old man in the old nature just is quite incapable of living the Christian life as God wants it lived. Just incapable of it.

And so as you watch this people wandering around and day by day dying, perhaps we could see in it an analogy between the church. You've heard the teaching of identification here, not just since I've come, but you've heard it back even in the days of Dr. Simpson, 78 years ago. Nothing new, nothing new at all.

But all across these years, there's been one after another that's come to the place of death. All alone, under some clump of cacti or some stone, he's just said, well, this is the end. He's come to the end of himself, and by death he's entered into the meaning of life.

And we've been wandering. The message is there. Oh, I wish, dear friend, that when the truth is given, everyone would respond to it like that.

Doesn't work that way. Some of you say, well, I've heard these truths, I've heard them, and they don't work, and they don't meet my need, and I'm no better than I was when I first heard them. I know.

But I'll tell you, when the truth will begin to live, it's in the crisis of desperation. That's it. It's in the crisis of your need.

And if you really want this truth, these truths, to become real and operative in your life, then there's a prayer you can pray that'll make it. Oh God, set in motion the chain of circumstances which will crowd me to the Christ and to the cross. That's it.

That's what'll happen. When you've come to that place, through circumstances, I'm just convinced, just as much as I'm before you, that no one ever enters into reality except through the crisis of desperation. As long as you can go on the way you've been going, you're going to do it.

But oh, how sweet and precious and loving is the ministry of the Holy Ghost to set in motion these circumstances, these chains of event, which bring us to the end of ourselves. And then in desperation, we say, well, to whom shall I go? And thou only hast the words of deliverance. And then we're willing to pay the price.

Take it by faith, believe it, and oh, so many things. And it's there, and I'm so glad it is there. But you're going to find sometime when you're pressed right against the wall, and you don't know where to turn, in your despair, in your hopelessness, just crying out, oh God, why did you ever let me get in these circumstances, that he's going to make these truths come to your mind with an inner clarity and an insight.

You're going to lay hold of them, and death will become real, little life may reign, and you'll enter in. Now, this is what happens. This is what we find happening here, all through these 40 years.

One after another, they're brought to the place of death because the old can't go in to the new. And we find now that Moses can't lead them on into victory. Moses can bring them so far.

Moses can only bring you to the place where you cry out, oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? That's all Moses can do. And then he has to go up on Mount Nebo and disappear. The law can't take you any further.

Then it's Joshua that comes. It's the greater, it's the Lord Jesus, Jehovah Savior, for that's what the word Joshua means. Joshua is the one that brings you out, who brought you out that he may bring you in.

The law served its good work. It put you in the place of hopelessness, it put you in the crisis of despair, it brought you to the end of yourself, it put you at wit's corner. That's all it can do.

Then you find that there's another Jehovah Savior, the Lord Jesus. And here you see him coming, anointed of God, filled with the Holy Ghost, is this Joshua of whom the record speaks. And it's his responsibility to lead the people in to the land.

The law led them out of Egypt, but prepared them and brought them to the cross and brought them to forgiveness and to the end of themselves, revealed their hopelessness and helplessness and powerlessness. That's all it can do. Now Joshua comes on.

And he's the one that we see. First of all, his name, as I've mentioned, we find that it is Jehovah Savior, Yahshua. And how lovely it is to realize that probably, or at least I like to think so, the name Jesus is Joshua.

It is the Greek form of this, Jesus. Or as it may be, Yeshua, my salvation, but then again it's Jehovah, my salvation. So still, Joshua is the very name of the Lord Jesus.

I say he comes after Moses. He follows on to complete the work. Does this Joshua in the Old Testament, just as the Lord Jesus Christ carries on to complete the work of the law? The law prepared you for grace.

It brought you to helplessness. And then it showed you Christ crucified for you. And it was through him that you receive forgiveness.

The law then continued its work and brought you to the end of yourself, to hopelessness in the flesh, to the sense that in you and your flesh was no good thing. And then it brought you to, again, to the place of death where you saw yourself crucified with Christ. He comes after Moses.

It's Joshua that leads us to victory. The Lord Jesus didn't intend for us to stay in the wilderness. He didn't intend for you to wander around in failure and defeat the days of your life and die there.

This wasn't his purpose. Just as Joshua led people across the Jordan, so the Lord Jesus wants to lead you on into all that he acquired for you by his, his victory at Calvary. Then, of course, even after you've entered in, even after you've come into a life of union with Christ, you remember that Israel across the Jordan was defeated at Ai.

And dear child of God, even after you've entered into an experiential reality of victory in Christ, you're going to encounter defeat. Believe me, you will. There'll be failure.

We're not talking about a life that's void of defeat and void of failure. We're not talking about a life where you can't sin. We're talking about a life where victory is possible in Christ.

We're talking about a life where you can walk in him, even as you have been put in him. But when defeat comes, what have you? Well, in the seventh chapter of Joshua, where the people of Israel were defeated there, you find that Joshua went into the presence of God in behalf of the people. They had sinned, certainly they had.

But these are the words. Would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side Jordan. O Lord, what shall I say when Israel tender backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us around and cut off our name from the earth.

And what will thou do on thy great name? Here's an intercessor. Israel has been defeated, but there's someone to intercede. I'm so glad that the Lord Jesus Christ is the intercessor with the Christian that's entered into victory.

And dear child of God, you perhaps have just recently staked ground and crossed Jordan, and yet since then you've found defeat. Don't despair. Certainly God will deal with the thing in your life that had brought it, but you have an intercessor.

You have someone at the right hand of the Father who's making the intercession for you. He not only led you, would lead you across and in, but he would intercede for you. And then of course we see also that Joshua is a type of Christ in that he allots the portion of the tribes and the people.

He divides it. And so our Lord Jesus divides by the Holy Spirit to every man, severally as he will. There are these lovely pictures of our Lord in the person of Joshua, but come with me for just a few moments back now to Israel at the bank of Jordan about the time they're to go in.

Moses my servant is dead. This is where we stopped our reading with the second verse. Now therefore arise.

It looks as though it were necessary for Moses to die. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people under the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. It was necessary for them to cross the Jordan when the water was in the highest level.

Now no one would think of crossing it with anything less than a secure boat. It was far too deep to wade across. The water was falling, as you know it falls several hundred feet in a short distance from the lake of Galilee down to the Dead Sea.

And here was this Jordan overflowing its banks, a mad rushing torrent that would bring death and destruction to anyone that went into it. And God has told Joshua to lead two and a half to three million people across this water. Well this is it.

It's death. You only enter into the inheritance of the Lord through the place of death. And this is the reason why so few have gone in.

Now I do not believe that Canaan stands for heaven in spite of all our lovely hymnody. And I don't fight with the hymn writers because they take poetic license with scripture. And so when they talk about on Canaan's banks, well I'll not fight them at all.

And we'll get a measure of blessing out of them. But frankly I just don't believe that the Canaan speaks of heaven. I believe that it speaks of a life of victory in the Lord Jesus Christ, the inheritance of the Christian in Christ.

Because there's warfare in Canaan, and bless your heart I hope there's no warfare in heaven. And therefore I think we just can't accept heaven, Canaan as a type of heaven. But as a type of, can I put it, the normal Christian life.

The normal Christian life. So we see that it is the people that have been brought out of Egypt, that have had their own innermost hearts exposed by the wilderness, that have seen the futility of the flesh, and have been prepared to accept the necessity of death that are now going to enter into their inheritance. But to get into their inheritance it is necessary for this generation to go through the same kind of death that the previous generation went through on the banks of the Red Sea.

And by that I would tie it into the fact that to get into your inheritance you must, by faith, consciously enter into union with Christ in his death. Certainly the water has been the place of death for a great many. Great many people have found it their means of death and their grave as well.

When the sea give up their dead it will be an innumerable host that will rise from their watery grave. And so we find that they're to come to this place where it is certain death from all that is to be humanly viewed. And it is necessary for Joshua, and of course you know that the Ark of the Covenant and the priests and so on as God later gives the orders as to how they're to proceed, but basically it's Joshua that must go before them for he is the one which must rally the people to this thing and carry them on.

We find that when Moses was called there was a great deal of reticence and hesitancy and excuse-giving. Moses just didn't want to go. He didn't want to serve.

But you don't find any of that with Joshua. Why? Because it's a picture of Jesus. And the Lord Jesus had no hesitancy.

He didn't have to be wheedled and begged and coaxed. The Lord Jesus was willing to go to that which was before him. And he had tasted death for every man, and every man tasted death in him.

And when Jesus Christ was crucified, you were crucified with him. And so Joshua as a picture of Christ can say to Israel, arise for on the morrow we go forth. This is the Lord Jesus saying to you that my timidly stay back in the wilderness of failure and defeat and powerlessness.

Arise! I've already been there. I know about it. I've come through it.

I want you to join me in it. I want you to go with me on into this. It is and it looks as though it'll be the ultimate destruction of everything dear to you, well and good.

What awaits you on the other side is so precious it's worth everything that it will cost. Can you see them come down? This rushing, raging, roaring torrent pouring past them. And the priests put their feet down into the place of death.

And do you know something? I believe if they'd have held their foot there waiting for the water to part, they'd be standing there yet if they were capable of doing. They had to push the water apart by putting their foot down. I don't think they got their foot wet, but they had to push it down.

And I don't think that when they did that, that the river just split and it opened up and they walked through. No, I think every step was a step of faith. Every time they put their foot down, they put it where water was.

They moved where water had been. They moved into it. Why do you say this you ask? Because dear friend, how many times in circumstances when God is cornering us, we'll stand here and say, all right Lord, I reckon myself dead.

Now take the circumstances away. He doesn't do that. That's not his way of dealing with us.

It isn't that. You see, so many times we want victory to deliver us from our difficulties, but our difficulties are for the purpose of delivering us from ourselves. And as soon as that is done, then the difficulties are no longer tools of God's purpose.

But how many times a person says, well now Lord, I'm willing to come into death. Well Lord, you didn't take the problems away. Well you see, the reason he didn't take the problem away, because he wasn't dealing with the problem, he was dealing with you.

God has no difficulty with problems. It's the human heart that is so difficult. So what he's going to do is put the Jordan of your circumstances in front of you, and he's going to force you into it.

And it's going to be just one step right down where the water was, but for each time you put your foot, the water will move. The water will move until you have crossed over into the Jordan. And as the priest went through, and then stood there, the people went through, and then they gathered up the twelve stones and carried them out, it was a testimony of death to self.

And this is what it's going to be in your experience. The only means by which you're ever going to enter into what God has for you is in the midst of the circumstances in which God puts you, you move in obedience to him. Obedience to him.

I said some time ago that everyone that comes to Christ has to thread his own heart on the cross to do it. It's as though the Lord stands here and says, come. And you say, well, Lord, I'd like to come, but that cross, it's pointing right at my heart.

Will you come anyway? And so you move right up, and the cross is there, and you have to take the next step that plunges, and the next, and the next, and the first thing you know, you have had to walk step by step right, as it were, onto the cross. You've walked, but you've come to him. And though it cost and it hurt and it caused anguish and pain and grief and heartache, it brought you to him.

And this is where so many fail, I do believe. They want to stand on the far side of Jordan and say, now, Lord, by faith I'm taking my place crucified with Christ, and I'm reckoning myself dead. Now, Lord, take the river away.

And they look, and the river's still there. They say, well, Lord, I'd better pray again. Now, Lord, take the river away.

I must not be dead yet. The river's still there. My friend, it's going to become real as you move into your circumstances, as you move into it, as you move into it.

This is how it is. This is the way it is. I don't know what it is that's pushing you to death and making you realize how far you are from this union with Christ.

It may be a temperament, may be a habit, may be a relationship in your whole. It may be some difficulty that you're encountering in your work. It may be any of many innumerable things that are situations of difficulty which God has used to show you your need of this union with Christ in his death.

And you're saying, oh, Lord, now I'm reckoning myself dead. Take away the difficulty, and it's still there. You're going to have to walk right into it.

Right into it. Right into it. Right into your habit.

Right into your traits. Right into your attitudes. And you're going to have to let the cross do its slaying work.

You say, now, Lord, plunge the cross through my heart. He won't do it. It's a step of faith.

And you move, and God will do his work in your life. Just as Israel came to the Jordan and stepped in and went through the water, the water parting in front of them. It is a place of death.

Death to your own interests, death to your own purpose, death to your own rights. It is, as we heard the other evening from Dr. Redpath, the commitment of the faculties, of the body, of the personality to the sovereignty of Christ. Perhaps we could say that the Red Sea was the commitment of our will to the principle of obedience to Christ.

Then the Jordan River will stand for the commitment of our personalities, the commitment of our bodies, the commitment of our rights, our natural, normal, good rights to Christ. But it is in this that as you've come to the Red Sea, it is the right to my name, the right to my reputation, the right to my personality, the right to my body, the right to my time, the right to everything that's intrinsically mine, I leave here in this place of death. And when you've come through on the other side, everything is his.

Everything is his. You've entered into a union with him, a conscious experiential union with him, wherein he has acquired the full rights to all that he purchased with his blood. It's a moment.

You say, is this going to take a long time? No, it's not going to take a long time. It's the moment, however, when you move into your circumstances and into this situation on a conscious union with him and his

death, and the issue that presses you into this union is the situation in which you find yourself. Oh, how many times when we get to a difficult thing, we're crying out to the Lord to make truth experientially real in our hearts, make it real in our hearts, and then when God puts us in a situation where he can make it real, we do everything we can to try and get away from the circumstances.

We don't want unpleasantness. Well, you're going to have to come to the place where you want victory more than you want pleasantness. You're going to have to come to the place where you want victory, where you want to enter into this relationship with him, where he's going to possess you and fill you and use you and live through you his life more than you want ease and comfort.

So many times God's heard our cry, and he's meeting the need and answering the prayer in the most unexpected ways by putting a Jordan River in front of us, which when we cross makes the inheritance ours, and we'll spend months and even years hunting for some way to fly over or tunnel under or walk around without actually moving into it, without moving into it. Perhaps it's the point of your besetting sin, the point of your weakness, but there's always some point of test that becomes the point of triumph. And I don't know what it is for you, but there will be some point in your experience, some place where you've failed, shamefully failed, maybe the point where you've most frequently failed, and the Lord will bring it up, and he's going to say, now here it is.

Are you going to enter into death with me to this? To this? And the moment that you go into this place which has been your besetting sin and the point of your failure and your weakness, and you take his life and his victory, the principle becomes operative in your life, and you move on from one victory into another victory and into another victory, until the truth becomes gloriously yours. This is the message of the Jordan River. It was a step-by-step crossing of the place of death until they were on the other side.

Now, I would like to ask, how many of you have seen the end of yourselves? How many of you have seen yourself as wandering in the wilderness, a failure, unable to bring forth to the glory of God, dependent upon him for life and breath and all things, but unable to render to him the fruit that will be to his glory and praise in your life, in your character, in your service? And you say, I've heard the truth about Canaan, I've heard how wonderful it is there, I've heard about victory, I've heard about the spirit-filled life, I've taken it all by faith, but it isn't real in my life yet, and I'm still here on the east side of Jordan in failure. Well, would you just find out, ask God to show you what your besetting sin is, what the point of greatest problem is? Will you ask him to show you where you failed most, if you don't already know? And then right there, the next time you come to the place where the waters lap up in temptation, Lord, the part of me that would think this, the part of me that would do this, is the part that's crucified with Christ, and that's one step, and I'm reckoning that I am crucified with Christ, and all that I am, and on and step by step by step, until you've passed through that experience, and then it'll be where the sole of your feet tread, it'll be a constant treading in victory that will become yours. But believe me, brethren, sisters, victory is going to begin on the place of your greatest need.

It's going to begin in the place of your greatest and most frequent failure, and it's going to begin when you put your foot right out and say, tonight by faith I am taking victory through my union with Christ and his death. Other than that, it's to wander around. May God make it real in your life.

God brought them out that he might bring them in, and he brought you out that he might bring you in, and he doesn't want your bones to bleach in the wilderness of failure. He wants to bring you on into glorious triumph in the Lord Jesus. Shall we pray? Now with our heads bowed and our eyes closed, I want to just

ask this.

Is there someone here tonight that I know I'm lost? I know I've never left Egypt. I know I'm still under the shadow of death, dead in my sins, but God has awakened me, and tonight I want to receive Christ as my Lord and my Savior. I want God's people to pray for me.

Will you raise your hand right now, wherever you are, whoever you may be. I know I'm lost, but I want to be saved. I want to be saved.

Now I want to ask something else. You say, tonight I know I've been brought out of Egypt. I know I'm in the wilderness.

I know I'm a child of God, but the law has done its work and shown me my failure, and I'm crying out, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I want to know victory, and I want to see. I don't quite see, or I just see for the first time, but tonight I want to solemnly covenant with the Lord Jesus to take victory on the grounds of my greatest need. I'll go step by step with him in this one circumstance and get something real there, and then I'll go on treading under my feet all the temptations and the pressures and the oppositions.

But I want to start, and I know I'm on the east side of Jordan, and I'm at the bank, and I want to go in. And tonight I'm willing to say, Lord, I'm going in, into union with you in your death. I'm going into this conscious reckoning of myself to be dead indeed in sin.

I want to know victory. I want to know triumph. I want the inheritance of the saints of the Lord.

Would you do that? If you would, don't tell me. Tell the Lord. Lord, I'm going through, through with you, Lord, into victory, across Jordan, into Canaan, bringing to my life the pressures and circumstances that are necessary to crowd me to this place of conscious death and resurrection, that I may know the deliverance that is mine in Christ.

Your greater Joshua, the Lord Jesus, is waiting to hear you say, I will arise on the morrow and cross Jordan. Father of our Lord Jesus, thou dost see us and know us and understand our hearts. May it be that tonight many dear hearts here that have stumbled in the wilderness will put their feet down right over the river of death and by faith move out and on and into this glorious victory that is ours in Christ.

So seal thy word to our hearts. May it have been clear, if it isn't clarified, Lord, for the sake of the deliverance of thy people. So bless and so lead us on as we follow in the train of the triumph of the Lord Jesus.

Now may the grace, mercy, and peace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be in abide with us all. And you who have need and would like help, remain seated and speak to me and we'll come to you for prayer. God bless you.

Good night.

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